



# Black Rock Forest Consortium

American Museum of Natural History • Barnard College • Browning School • The Calhoun School  
Central Park Conservancy • Columbia University • Cornwall Central School District • The Dalton School • Hunter College  
Marine Biological Laboratory -The Ecosystems Center • Metropolitan Montessori School • New York-New Jersey Trail Conference  
New York City PS/IS 311 • New York University • Newburgh Enlarged City School District • The School at Columbia University  
The Spence School • Storm King School • Trevor Day School • Urban Assembly for Applied Math and Science

## **Stiefel Foundation Small Grants For Scientific Research and Education**

Twenty-first Annual Award Program

Guidelines for 2010

Application Deadline  
February 1, 2010, 5:00 PM

Announcement of Awards  
March 15, 2010

Funding Begins  
April 2010

### INFORMATION CONTACT:

WILLIAM SCHUSTER  
FOREST DIRECTOR  
129 Continental Road  
Cornwall, New York 12518  
845-534-4517 Tele  
845-534-6975 Fax  
[blackroc@LDEO.columbia.edu](mailto:blackroc@LDEO.columbia.edu)

## **BRF CONSORTIUM SMALL GRANTS AWARD PROGRAM 21**

### **BACKGROUND AND ELIGIBILITY**

Small grants are available to promote research and education projects at the Black Rock Forest (BRF). This program is funded by a generous grant from the Ernst C. Stiefel Foundation and, (studies of the environmental impacts of recreation may request supplemental matching funds from the New York- New Jersey Trail Conference). Projects must involve research and/or programs related to the biota and/or physical environment of Black Rock Forest. Proposals must be prepared by a Principal Investigator or Project Coordinator (hereafter termed the PI) who must be a faculty member<sup>1</sup> at a Black Rock Forest Consortium institution. Postdoctoral associates, graduate students, and undergraduates are eligible if their proposal is submitted through a faculty member who will supervise the project. The PI, not the institution, submits the proposal and the award is made to the PI. For education projects, the signature of an administrator on the cover sheet is required to indicate institutional support for the project. A PI may submit only one proposal per funding period. The ordinary maximum request is \$5000 for research proposals and \$3000 for education projects. However, PIs may request larger grants if circumstances merit and advance permission is given by the Executive Director. Partnerships between two institutions are especially encouraged and may merit larger requests. Multiyear projects are not funded but renewals can be submitted for up to three years. The grant period is one year.

The budget of the proposal may request support (e.g., summer stipends, but not benefits) for students at Consortium institutions, postdoctoral associates, and for specialized consultants. Support in the form of summer salary, wages or stipends for the PI(s) or faculty is not allowed. Travel expenses to and from the BRF area are allowed.<sup>2</sup> Faculty and students should arrange their own transportation to and within the BRF. Food expenses are not covered but lodging costs at BRF facilities may be included (call 845-534-4517 or check web site for availability). Indirect costs (institutional overhead) are not supported. Unless otherwise stipulated in the award letter, equipment purchased will remain at or be returned to BRF at the end of the grant period.

Applications for the Small Grants for Scientific Research and Education program must be received at the Black Rock Forest (electronic submission encouraged) by 5:00 PM on February 1, 2010. Consultation with the Forest Director is suggested prior to proposal preparation to help define appropriate projects, methods, and budgets. Grant administration for successful proposals is governed by conditions of a grant letter sent to successful applicants.

### **EVALUATION**

Each proposal will be judged on the extent to which it reflects a well conceived design, clearly stated goals and a reasonable promise of successful completion. Priority will be given to projects that combine research with education at one or more Consortium institutions. Research proposals will be judged as to (1) evidence of scholarly promise/productivity; (2) significance of the project in relation to its contribution to the field; and (3) evidence of the importance of BRF in answering the research questions. Research awards are made for independent, original projects that can stand alone, and which will lead to peer-reviewed publication and hopefully funding from other sources for continued research at BRF. Education proposals will be judged on evidence that other Consortium members will be able to use or replicate the products of the project.

<sup>1</sup>in this brochure, faculty = staff member = educator = administrator = scientist, i.e. those who are full-time employees on the regular payroll of a Black Rock Forest Consortium institution.

<sup>2</sup>tolls plus \$0.50 per mile.

## **BRF Consortium Small Grants Award Program 21, continued**

The history of other funding received by the applicant may be taken into consideration and priority will be given to projects that involve more than one Consortium institution. The Black Rock Forest Program Committee will make award decisions in consultation with the Forest Director. Final decisions will be announced by written notification.

### **PRIORITIES FOR 2010**

**Proposals are particularly solicited in the following priority areas:**

1. Production of educational materials related to alternative energy technologies.
2. Projects that enhance the utility of Black Rock Forest's web site and contribute to the Consortium's Virtual Forest Initiative.
3. Research on forest ecosystem sustainability and response to disturbance.
4. Studies of plant and ecosystem function along urbanization gradients.
5. Research on the environmental impacts of recreation, particularly (but not limited to) the impacts of trails.

### **PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

Contact with Black Rock Forest Consortium staff prior to proposal preparation may help determine if the proposed project is appropriate. Send proposals, preferably digital copy, to Dr. William Schuster at [blackroc@LDEO.columbia.edu](mailto:blackroc@LDEO.columbia.edu) (hard copy mailing address: Black Rock Forest Consortium, 129 Continental Road, Cornwall, NY 12518). A reply email or postcard will be returned to the PI indicating receipt of the application. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Proposals should contain:

1. **Cover Sheet** Use the attached form and indicate either research or education proposal. Choose a short descriptive title. Use the same title as the previous proposal if this is a renewal application. On the cover sheet, check all boxes that apply. If a research project involves human subjects you will be required to conform to guidelines established by the NIH and NSF regarding consent forms and the rights, privacy, and welfare of your subjects. If your project involves vertebrate animals you are required to adhere to your institution's animal welfare guidelines as set forth by NIH and NSF. Research involving endangered species must conform to state and federal regulations.
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Proposed Budget** A maximum of \$5000 may be requested for research proposals and \$3000 for education projects, except with prior approval for higher amounts by the Executive Director. Salary or wages for PI or faculty are prohibited (see Background and Eligibility). Stipends for student research assistants are allowed. Travel expenses to and from the BRF and lodging at BRF are allowed, along with equipment and supplies.
4. **Budget Justification** Specify the reasons for the funds requested. Requests for items of equipment costing more than \$1500 require manufacturer and model number with the need for the particular model clearly explained. Briefly describe expendable supplies requested. Requests for equipment devoted to field or lab needs are encouraged; unless very well justified, requests for computers or computer upgrades are not encouraged.

## BRF Consortium Small Grants Award Program 21, continued

Unless otherwise stipulated in the award letter, equipment purchased will become the property of the BRF at the end of the grant period.

5. **Other Funding** A list of current awards controlled by the PI, including source, amount and period of support. If there are no current awards, state "None".
6. **Prior Black Rock Forest Awards** including a final report, any publications resulting from these awards, and the fate of student participants.
7. **Curriculum Vitae or Educational Resume** of PI and of each faculty investigator participating in the project, limited to four pages single-spaced per person.
8. **Project Description** The project description is limited to a maximum of six single-spaced pages (exclusive of Literature Cited) with one inch margins all around. Additional information can be supplied in an Appendix. The Introduction should state the problem, the questions, or the hypotheses to be tested. Specific objectives for the period of support should be listed. Background material should be provided that puts the project in perspective and includes a brief review of relevant literature. The Research Design or Project Design section should present descriptions of experiments, and/or other work to be undertaken including the procedures to be used. Provide a time course for the stages of the project and plans for removal of equipment and materials from the Forest at the end of the project. If the proposal is for renewal of a previous grant, please include a report summarizing your findings to date. If appropriate for inclusion, Literature Cited should be the last section of the proposal.

## REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTS

All projects at BRF require prior written approval of the Forest Director (approval of a Small Grant will satisfy this requirement). All PIs must file a written plan documenting procedures, equipment and materials, discussion of access and safety issues. PIs must submit data, with metadata in appropriate format, within two years of collection. **All equipment and materials must be removed and/or properly disposed of at the end of the study.** Substantive changes must be approved in advance. At the end of the grant period the PI must submit a final report within 60 days. The report should (1) briefly present and discuss the results and (2) account for how the funds were spent. A copy of each publication<sup>3</sup> resulting from the project should be submitted. Publications should contain an acknowledgement of support from the Stiefel Foundation Small Grants for Research at the Black Rock Forest Consortium.

<sup>3</sup>any type of publication - in-house, peer-reviewed, non-peer-reviewed, popular press